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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,

OFFICE OF EXPERIMENT STATIONS.

CIRCULAR NO. 2.

WASHINGTON, D. C., JANUARY 31, 1889.

DEAR SIR:

Several of the Experiment Stations have expressed a desire for consultation in regard to methods of investigation and co-operative experimenting on plant nutrition and use of fertilizers, including pot, box, and, more especially, field experiments.

The Stations in a number of States have undertaken field experiments with fertilizers upon plans so nearly alike as to be comparable. Others have indicated their wish to unite in such work. Experience has shown that this may be made one of the most effective means by which the Stations may help farmers and secure their sympathy and support. The importance of the subject, the advantage of working on a common plan, and the desirability of exchange of experience are self evident.

Nearly a year ago Prof. S. W. Johnson, Director of the Connecticut Station, courteously invited Stations interested in these lines of work to meet at New Haven, but the remarkably severe storm that came on at the time obstructed travel and prevented a meeting.

As adequate consultation was not found practicable at the late Convention in Knoxville, it has been suggested that a meeting of those interested be held in a convenient place at the earliest practicable date. Since the Stations of the Eastern and Southern States are most interested in the matter, probably such a point as New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore or Washington, or one of the Stations of the Atlantic States would be most desirable. It would afford the Commissioner of Agriculture and the Director of the Office of Experiment Stations of this Department great pleasure to welcome such a meeting in Washington.

Important as such a meeting is felt to be, many will doubtless find it difficult to attend one at this season and so shortly after Knoxville Convention. But even if the number of Stations represented is not large the conference will be valuable. The issuing of a circular to contain some suggestions on co-operative work has been contemplated by this Office. To give it its highest value the views of those who have had the most experience should be incorporated as fully as practicable. In this matter such a conference would be helpful.

Of course any other topics of interest could be discussed at such a meeting. The desire for conference regarding Studies of Soils and Crops and Feeding Experiments have been strongly expressed.

If the matter is of sufficient importance to you, may I ask you to reply at your earliest convenience to the following questions?

1. Will your Station be interested to join in any work of the kinds named?

2. Could your Station be represented at a meeting? If so, what place and time would be most convenient? Is there any particular time or any place among those suggested at which you could not be represented?

Any suggestions you may be inclined to make will be most welcome.

Very respectfully,

W. O. Atwater,
Director.